

Message Text

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13

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 SR-02 ORM-03 AID-20 INRE-00

PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

AGR-20 EB-11 RSR-01 /129 W
----- 007984

P R 061446 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8018

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

GUESKW/ AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 226

USMISSION USUN

USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2779

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDITION OF REFERENCE)

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, SREF, UNRWA, XF, IS

SUBJECT: REDUCED US FLOUR CONTRIBUTION TO UNRWA FY 74

REFERENCE: BEIRUT 3831

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SOME GOI OFFICIAL ESTIMATE FULL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION MAKES POSSIBLE 85-90 PERCENT CUTS IN UNRWA RATION ROLLS FOR GAZA AND WEST BANK AND SOME HAVE EVEN OPINED THAT GOI IS ABLE TAKE OVER ALL UNRWA OPERATIONS IN OCCUPIED AREAS. HOWEVER, OFFICIAL GOI POLICY REMAINS ONE OF HANDS OFF UNRWA. GOI WOULD NOT MAKE MOVE TO TAKE OVER FROM UNRWA UNLESS REQUESTED TO DO SO BY UNRWA ITSELF OR US AND OTHER MAJOR DONORS. GOI OFFICIALS HAVE RECENTLY URGED THAT US TAKE INITIATIVE IN BRINGING CHANGE TO UNRWA OPERATIONS IN OCCUPIED AREAS WHERE RELIEF MISSION OUTDATED IN VIEW GROWING PROSPERITY OF RESIDENTS AND AVAILABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THOSE WHO SEEK IT. EMBASSY SUGGESTS PROVIDING REFUGEES WITH UN IDENTITY
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CARD NOTING STATUS AS REFUGEE COULD OVERCOME MUCH PRESENT
OBJECTION TO REFUGEES' LOSS OF UNRWA RATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. UNRWA COMGEN RENNIE'S COMMENT PARA 2 REFTTEL THAT GOI " WOULD
DOUBTLESS LOOK WITH EQUANIMITY ON ELIMINATION OF 165,000
PERSONS FROM RATION ROLLS IN GAZA AND WEST BANK" CONFORMS WITH
STATEMENTS MADE TO EMBOFFS BY WORKING LEVEL GOI OFFICIALS IN
MFA AND MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE (MSW) DURING RECENT MONTHS.
THESE OFFICIALS ESTIMATE THAT ONLY 10 PERCENT OF 129,000
WEST BANK AND 15 PERCENT OF 194,000 GAZA UNRWA RATION RECIPI-
ENTS ARE IN FACT NEEDY, THE OTHERS BEING FULLY EMPLOYED EITHER
ON REGULAR BASIS OR CONSECUTIVE SHORT TERM JOBS AND ARE
THEREFORE SELF- SUPPORTING. MSW SOURCE BELIEVES THAT SURVEY OF
CONDITIONS IN OCCUPIED AREAS INDICATES GOI COULD EASILY TAKE
OVER ALL UNRWA'S ACTIVITIES IN OCCUPIED AREAS WITHOUT
INCURRING UNDUE ECONOMIC BURDEN.

3. MFA OFFICERS HAVE SHOWN MORE CAUTION AND POINTED OUT
THAT GOI WOULD TAKE NO UNILATERAL ACTION TOWARD UNRWA'S
OPERATIONS THAT WOULD PUT ONUS ON ISRAEL. HOWEVER, THEY
ENCOURAGE
USG AS MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR FOR UNRWA'S FINANCING TO TAKE INITIATIVE
TO BRING ABOUT NEEDED CHANGES IN UNRWA OPERATIONS IN OCCUPIED
AREAS DUE TO PRESENT FULL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION AMONG RESIDENTS
OF OCCUPIED AREAS. MFA OFFICERS STATE GOI UNWILLING
TAKE ONUS OF THROWING OUT UNRWA OR EVEN ELIMINATING REFUGEE S'
NAMES FROM RATION ROLLS BECAUSE GOI STILL BITTER ABOUT UNRWA
COMGEN'S REPORT ON IDF JULY/ AUGUST 1971 GAZA CAMPS THINNING
OUT OPERATIONS.

4. EMBASSY RECOGNIZES DIFFICULTY IN UNRWA'S RAPIDLY SCREENING
RATION ROLLS AND REMOVING NAMES OF THOSE EMPLOYED. GOI OFFICIALS
TEND TO ASSUME THAT SINCE SUCH A HIGH PROPORTION OF REFUGEES
APPLYING FOR JOBS SUCCEED IN GETTING THEM, ALL OTHER REFUGEES
COULD DO LIKEWISE. ON OTHER HAND UNRWA RELUCTANT DROP
THOSE REFUGEES WHOSE " UNOFFICIAL- ILLEGAL" WORK IN ISRAEL IS
TEMPORARY IN NATURE, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY BE EMPLOYED FOR GREATER
PART OF YEAR. GOI POSITION IS THAT ONLY WAY FOR TRUE PICTURE
TO BE KNOWN IS TO OPEN CAMPS TO SKILLED GOI SOCIAL WORKERS
(MOSTLY AREA ARABS WITH ISRAELI SUPERVISION) TO
ASCERTAIN WHETHER REFUGEES EMPLOYED FULL TIME. THIS PROCESS
HAS BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN REDUCING RATION ROLLS OF EMBASSY'S
NON- REFUGEE TITLE II PROGRAM IN THE AREAS. GOI DOES NOT
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TRUST UNRWA LOCAL EMPLOYEES, WHO ARE THEMSELVES REFUGEES, TO
REPORT FACTUALLY ON CONDITION OF FELLOW REFUGEES.

5. FURTHERMORE, GOI'S POLICY IS THAT GIVEN FULL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION ANY RESIDENT OF OCCUPIED AREAS WILLING AND ABLE TO WORK WILL BE PROVIDED WITH WORK. AS EXAMPLE, SOME SINAI BEDOUINS ARE NOW RECEIVING VOCATIONAL TRAINING AT AL- ARISH AND BIR EL- ABD CENTERS. THESE PREVIOUSLY ILLITERATE BEDOUINS HAVE BEEN TAUGHT ELEMENTARY ARABIC READING AND WRITING, SOME SPOKEN HEBREW AND BASIC AUTO MECHANICS OR BUILDING SKILLS. INITIAL RESULTS OF BEDOUIN COURSES HAVE SHOWN THEY COULD BE TRAINED TO PERFORM USEFUL JOBS.

6. OUR OBSERVATION OF RESISTANCE TO REDUCTION OF RATION ROLLS INDICATES ONE MAJOR CAUSE FOR REFUGEES' CONCERN IS LOSS OF RATION CARD WHEN NAME TAKEN OFF ROLLS. IN REFUGEES' MINDS THIS ALSO REMOVES THEIR STATUS AS PALESTINIAN REFUGEES, A POLITICALLY IMPORTANT STATUS. WE SUGGEST THAT PROVISION OF UN REFUGEE IDENTITY CARD WHICH NOTES HOLDER LOST RESIDENCE IN PALESTINE AS RESULT OF 1948 HOSTILITIES WOULD GO LONG WAY TOWARD OVERCOMING REFUGEES' ANXIETIES ABOUT LOSING RATION CARD. ZURHELLEN

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